

FRAN

BY
JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
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SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. The repairs, which he is making, are being made during the service and he is asked to leave. Abbott, Ashton, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashton becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is seen by Sapphira, Clinton, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board. Fran tells Gregory she wants a home with him. Grace, Gregory's private secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Fran hints at a twenty-year-old secret, and Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending college and then deserted her. Fran is the child of that marriage. Gregory explains that Fran is the daughter of a very dear friend who is dead. Fran agrees to the story. Mrs. Gregory insists on her making her home with them and takes her to her room. Fran declares the secretary must go. Grace begins nagging Fran in an effort to drive her from the Gregory home. Abbott, while taking a walk alone at midnight, finds Fran on a bridge looking her fortune by cards. She tells Abbott that she is the famous lion tamer, Fran Nonpareil. The first of eleven lions she brought home. Grace decides to ask Bob Clinton to go to Springfield to investigate the disappearance of Fran. The latter returns to Gregory's store, and interrupts a touching scene between father and daughter. Grace tells Gregory she intends to marry Clinton and quit her service. He declares that he cannot continue his work without her. Carried away by passion, he takes her to his arms. Fran walks in on them, and declares that Grace must leave the house at once. To Gregory's consternation, he learns of Clinton's mission to Springfield. Clinton returns from Springfield and, at Fran's request, Abbott urges him not to discuss what he has learned. He tells her that once she leaves Gregory, at once, Clinton agrees to keep silent. Driven into a corner, Fran is forced to leave. Gregory is forced to dismiss Grace. Fran is offered the job of bookkeeper in Clinton's grocery store. Gregory's infatuation leads him to seek Grace to tell her the story of his past. Grace points out that as he married the present Mrs. Gregory before the death of Fran's mother, he is not now legally married. They decide to flee at once. They attempt to escape during the excitement of a street fair and are forced to enter the lion tent to avoid Clinton. Abbott wanders into the lion tent in the time. A young woman wearing a mask is taking the place of the regular trainer. One of the lion tamer's assistants removes her mask revealing the features of Fran. She finally overcomes the real Mrs. Gregory's eyes are opened to the real nature of Grace as she sees murder in her eyes during Fran's escape. She tells her all is over between them.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Continued.
He met her eyes unfalteringly. "It's already nine o'clock," he said with singular composure. "Don't forget nine-thirty."

Then he disappeared in the crowd. Then, to her amazement, she beheld Hamilton Gregory stumbling toward her, looking neither to right nor left, seeing none but her—Hamilton Gregory at a show! Hamilton Gregory there, of all places, his eyes wide, his head thrown back as if to bare his face to her startled gaze.

"Fran!" cried Gregory, thrusting forth his arms to take her hands.

"Fran! Even now, the bars divide us. But oh, I am so glad, so glad—and God answered my prayer and saved you, Fran—my daughter!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Near the Sky.
It was half-past nine when Abbott met Fran, according to appointment, before the Snake Den. From her hands she had removed the color of Italy, and from her body, the glittering raiment of La Gouzzetti.

Fran came up to the young man from out the crowded street, all quivering excitement. In contrast with the pulsing life that ceaselessly changed her face, as from reflections of dancing light-points, his composure showed almost grotesque.

"Here I am," she panted, shooting a quizzical glance at his face, "are you ready for me? Come on, then, and I'll show you the very place for us."

Abbott inquired serenely: "Down there in the Den?"

"No," she returned, "not in the Den. You're no Daniel, if I am a Chatterbox. No dens for us."

"Nor lion cages?" inquired Abbott, still inscrutable; "never again."

"Never again," came her response. Fran stopped before the Ferris Wheel.

"Let's take a ride," she said, a little tremulously. "Won't need tickets, Bill, stop the wheel; I want to go right up. This is a friend of mine—Mr. Ashton. And Abbott, this is an older friend than you—Mr. Bill Smookins."

LEGEND OF GARDEN OF EDEN
Oriental Christians Believe Banana Tree Was the Source of Good and Evil.

There exists a legend relative to the Christian inhabitants of the east that they believe the banana to be the tree of the source of good and evil, in a bunch of the fruit of which the serpent that tempted Eve hid itself, and they add that when Adam and Eve became ashamed of their nakedness, they covered themselves with the leaves of this plant.

The origin of the banana is given as India, at the foot of the Himalayas, where it has been cultivated since remotest antiquity, says the National Geographic Magazine. Its origin in the new world is as doubtful as the origin of the American Indian. Natural to Asia and Africa, where more than twenty distinct species of the genus are known, it is said to have been brought first to America from Spain, early in the sixteenth century, and planted in the island of Santo Domingo, whence it spread was rapid.

Mr. Bill Smookins was an exceedingly hard-featured man, of no recognizable age. Externally, he was blue overalls and greasy tar.

Abbott grasped Bill's hand, and inquired about business.

"Awful poor, sense Fran left the show," was the answer, accompanied by a grin that threatened to cut the weather-beaten face wide open.

Fran beamed. "Mr. Smookins knew my mother—didn't you, Bill? He was awful good to me when I was a kid. Mr. Smookins was a Human Nymph in those days, and he smoked and talked, he did, right down under the water—remember, Bill? That was sure-enough water—oh, he's a sure-enough Bill, let me tell you!"

Bill intimated, as he slowed down the engine, that the rheumatism he had acquired under the water, was sure-enough rheumatism—hence his change of occupation. "I was strong enough to be a Human Nymph," he explained, "but not endurable. Nobody can't last many years as a Human Nymph."

Abbott indicated his companion—"Here's one that'll last my time."

The wheel stopped. He and Fran were barred into a seat.

"And now," Fran exclaimed, "it's all ups and downs, just like a moving picture of life. Why don't you say something, Mr. Ashton? But no, you can keep still—I'm excited to death, and wouldn't hear you anyway. I want to do all the talking—I always do, after I've been in the cage. My brain is filled with air—so this is the time to be soaring up into the sky, isn't it? What is your brain filled with?—but never mind. We'll be just two balloons—my! aren't you glad we haven't any strings on us—suppose some people had hold—I, for one, would be willing never to go down again. Where are the clouds?—Wish we could meet a few. See how I'm trembling—always do, after the lions. Now, Abbott, I'll leave a small opening for just one word—"

"I'll steady you," said Abbott, briefly, and he took her hand. She did not appear conscious of his protecting clasp.

"I never see the moon so big," she went on, breathlessly, "without thinking of that night when it rolled along the pasture as if it wanted to knock us off the foot-bridge for being where we oughtn't. I never could understand why you should stay on that bridge with a perfect stranger, when your duty was to be usher at the camp-meeting! You weren't ushering me, you know, you were holding my hand—I mean, I was holding your hand, as Miss Sapphira says I shouldn't. What a poor helpless man—as I'm holding you now, I presume! But I laughed in meeting. People ought to go outdoors to smile, and keep their religion in a house, I guess. I'm going to tell you why I laughed, for you've never guessed, and you've always been afraid to ask—"

"Afraid of you, Fran?"

"Awfully, I'm going to show you—let go, so I can show you. No, I'm earnest—you can have me, afterwards."

Remember that evangelist? There he stood, waving his hands—as I'm doing now—moving his arms with his eyes fastened upon the congregation—this way—look, Abbott."

"Fran! As if I were not already looking."

"Look—just so; not saying a word—only waving this way and that—"

Since then, I've just loved. That's easy."

"What will people think of a superintendent of public schools caring for a show-girl, even if she is Fran Nonpareil. How would it affect your career?"

"But you have promised never again to engage in a show, so you are not a show-girl."

"What about my mother who lived and died as a lion-tamer? What will you do about my life-history? I'd never speak to a man who could feel ashamed of my mother. What about my father who has never publicly acknowledged me? I'd not want to have anything to do with a man who—who could be proud of him."

"As to the past, Fran, I have only this to say: Whatever hardships it contained, whatever wrongs or wretches—"



"Up, Samson, Up!"

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Little Lesson in Efficiency.
A woman who has been studying the science of household efficiency comments that the obvious things that every woman ought to know about conserving time and energy in the doing of the daily household tasks are the ones that seem to make no impression upon the average household. For instance, she says, always have the draining pan when washing dishes upon the left of the dishpan. You naturally wash the dishes with the right and hold them in the left. Then set them down on the left without using energy to reach across the right. Sounds sensible, doesn't it?

Out of the Dictograph.
To think before you speak will help some, but it's better yet to hustle around and verify your facts.

The man with a hand full of trumps never developed a suspicion that the deal isn't square.

Birdie Frances feels terribly disgraced because her mother, as a girl, had to learn to play "Monastery Bells" and "Silver Waves" instead of ragtime.

VALUE QUEER RELICS HIGHLY
Large Sums Have Frequently Been Paid for Articles That Many Would Call Grosse.

It is not every man, not every hero worshiper, who would esteem the tooth of his hero of more value than diamonds. There is a ring belonging to an English nobleman, in which the place of honor, formerly occupied by a diamond, is given to a tooth that once did duty in a human jaw.

This tooth cost no less than three thousand six hundred and fifty dollars; and it was the tooth of Sir Isaac Newton. A relic collector sold it at auction in 1846, and the nobleman who bought it gave it the place of a diamond in his favorite ring.

Another tooth, which so far excites the veneration of hero worshipers as to be able to hold a court of its own and to draw from long distances a small host of followers, is one that was originally hidden behind the lips of Victor Hugo. It is kept at the former residence in a glass case bearing the inscription, "Tooth drawn from the jaw of Victor Hugo by the dentist

uneasily. "In the superlatives? I don't see how you can, after that exhibition behind the bars. Anyway, I want you to talk about yourself. What made you go away from town? But that's not the worst; what made you stay away? And what were you doing out there wherever it was, while poor little girls were wondering themselves about you? But wait—the wheel's going down—down—down."

Good thing I have you to hold to—poor Miss Sapphira, she can't come now! Listen at all the street criers, getting closer, and the whistle sounds—I wish we had whistles; the squawky kind. See my element, Abbott, the air I've breathed all my life—the carnival. Here we are, just above the clouds of confetti—"

Now we're riding through—pretty damp, these clouds are, don't you think? These ribbons of electric lights have been the real world to me. Abbott—they were home. No, Bill, we don't want to get out. We intend to ride until you take this wheel to pieces. And oh, by the way, Bill—just stop this wheel, every once in a while, will you?—when we're up at the very tiptop. All right—good-by."

And Abbott called gaily, "Good-by, Mr. Smookins!"

"I'm glad you did that, Abbott. You think you're somebody, when somebody else thinks so, too. Now we're rising in the world." Fran was so excited that she could not keep her body from quivering. In spite of this, she fastened her eyes upon Abbott to ask, suddenly, "Most—what?"

"Most adorable," Abbott answered, as if he had been waiting for the prompting. "Most precious. Most bewitchingly sweet. Most unanswerably and eternally—Fran!"

"And you—"

"And I," he told her, "am nothing but most wanting-to-be-loved."

"It's so queer," Fran said, plaintively. "You know, Abbott, how long you've fought against me. You know it, and I don't blame you, not in the least. There's nothing about me to make people—"

"But even now, how can you think you understand me, when I don't understand myself?"

"I don't," he said, promptly. "I've been killed right there before his eyes, and seeing it with his very own eyes made him feel responsible. He told me, afterwards, that when he found out who it was in the cage, he thought of mother in a different way—he saw how his desertion had driven her to earning her living with showmen, so I could be supported. All in all, he is a changed man."

"Then will he acknowledge you?"

"You see? He can't, on account of Mrs. Gregory. There's no future for him, or for her, except to go on living as man and wife without the secretary. He imagines it would be a sort of reparation to present me to the world as his daughter, he thinks it would give him happiness—but it can't be. Grace has found it all out—"

"Then she will tell!" Abbott exclaimed, in dismay.

"She would have told but for one thing. She doesn't dare, and it's on her own account—of course. She has been terribly—well, indiscreet. You can't think of what lengths she was willing to go—not from coldly making up her mind, but because she lost grip on herself, from always thinking she couldn't. So she went away with Bob Clinton—she'll marry him, and they'll go to Chicago, out of Littleburg history—poor Bob! Remember the night as was trying to get religion? I'm afraid he'll conclude that religion isn't what he thought it was, living so close to it from now on."

"All this interests me greatly, dear, because it interests you. Still, it doesn't bear upon the main question."

"Abbott, you don't know why I went to that show to act. You thought I was caring for a sick friend. What do you think of such deceptions?"

"I think I understand, Simon Jefferson told me of a girl falling from a trapeze; it was possibly La Gouzzetti's daughter. Mrs. Jefferson told me that Mrs. Gregory is nursing some one. The same one, I imagine, and La Gouzzetti was a friend of yours, and you took her place, so the mother could stay with the injured daughter?"

"You're a wonder, yourself!" Fran declared, dropping her hands to stare at him. "Yes, that's it. All these show-people are friends of mine. When the mayor was trying to decide what carnival company they'd have for the street fair, I told him about this show, and that's why it's here. Poor La Gouzzetti needs the money dreadfully—for they spend it as fast as it's paid in. The little darling will have to go to a hospital, and there's nothing laid by. The boys all there in, but they didn't have much, themselves. Nobody has. Everybody's poor in this old world—except you and me. I've taken La Gouzzetti's place in the cage all day to keep her from losing

on Wednesday, August 11, 1871, in the gardens attached to the house of Madame Koch, at three o'clock in the afternoon."

The wig of a literary man appears to have been even more sought after than his teeth. That which Sterne wore while writing "Tristram Shandy" was sold soon after the writer's death for ten thousand dollars; and the favorite chair of Alexander Pope brought five thousand dollars.

The most extravagant instance of literary hero worship is that of a well-known Englishman, who constantly wears a small locket attached to a chain round his neck—a part of the charred skull of Shelley—"The Sunday Magazine."

The Gallant.
Judge—The lady from whom you stole a kiss declares herself ready to waive her demand for punishment if you will ask her pardon and express your regret for what has happened.

Gentlemen (to the offended lady)—Yes, I am willing to beg your pardon. But to regret that I gave you the kiss dear madam, that I cannot!

Two negroes were discussing their young sons, and the first declared he intended to make his hopeful an astronomer. "At a fine job," he concluded. "Yes," drawled the other. "Yeh does twine do do afore, but shuts he gwine to do in day-ast?"

Trying to Save Father.
"The songs you and your daughters sing and the daring costumes you wear!" exclaimed the serious woman. "Yes," replied Mr. Gaudin, "we don't like 'em much ourselves, but we feel it's our duty to make home attractive and keep father away from those extravagant shows."

NATIONAL CAPITAL AFFAIRS

U. S. Keeps Tab Upon Army and Navy Deserters

WASHINGTON—As Uncle Sam finds trouble in locating recalcitrant members of the army and navy who take "French leave," there is a bureau in both the war and navy departments to keep tab on these individuals.

In the war department the bureau is presided over by a "graybeard" who has been in the service since eight years after the Civil war. He is so familiar with the files of the office under the adjutant general that each yellow-back envelope is almost like an old friend. "Like father, like son" is an old adage, and it was never more true than of conditions in this office.

Like the old man who presides over the destinies of the yellow-back paper envelopes and the antiquated furniture, are the methods which he employs in conducting the affairs of the bureau.

"I would like you to look up for me the name of Ray Schultz or Roy Schult or Schultz," was a request made of this official recently. It has been estimated that in the past ten years nearly 1,000,000 record enlistments have been filed in the office. As the files are arranged, however, a search is not the arduous task that upon first glance it seems to be.

On every side of the room, which runs the entire length of one wing of the war department, are steel file cases. The enlistment date was secured in a little less than two hours.

An answer to a similar inquiry in the navy department was obtained in a little less than 20 minutes.

The system there is entirely different. It follows the index system of the modern department store. Young naval officers on their first leg of real army work after graduating as cadets from the academy at Annapolis, are usually put into this office as chiefs, in line with the policy of Secretary of the Navy Daniels of giving the naval officer a thorough practical training in every branch of the service, both "afloat and ashore."

As an officer explained, it sometimes developed that hurry was mandatory. He pointed out the case of an enlisted man who had been arrested in a southern city for deserting his ship, which had been ordered to Mexican waters.

The enlisted man upon arrest denied he was an enlisted man. No immediate proof could be obtained that he was in the navy or that he was a deserter. The only accusation against him was brought by a witness who thought he had recognized the man. Navy officials were communicated with, but the only word received by the court officers was "hold the prisoner for identification." It was three days before the court was completely convinced that the enlisted man was a member of the navy.

The files of the army, navy and marine corps for the past ten years, it is estimated, contain 5,000,000 names.

Everything Under the Sun at Special Prices

EVERYTHING but a nursing bottle! was the conclusion reached by Byron R. Newton, assistant secretary of the treasury, commenting on the wide and inexhaustible range of articles in the schedule of the general supply committee, showing that the government is prepared to supply at special contract prices to all departments and administrative bureaus in Washington.

"It embraces every other commodity under the sun,"

"Hold on!" said his private secretary. The private secretary took over the general schedule that Mr. Newton had laid aside. He thumbed over the pages.

"Nursing bottles—bottles—ah, under laboratory apparatus. Bottles—but not the right sort. Hospital supplies. Here we are," said the private secretary, pointing out an item to Mr. Newton.

"5620. Bottles of samples. (d) Nursing, graduated, 12 ounces," Mr. Newton read in the book.

"By love. Even a nursing bottle. It has every thing under the sun that can be bought," he admitted. And so it seems.

Stationery and drafting supplies; hardware, metals, cordage and leather and saddlery; dry goods and wearing apparel; drugs and medicines, chemicals and reagents; laboratory, hospital appliances and surgical instruments; electrical engineering and plumbing supplies; lumber, millwork, packing boxes and building materials; paints, oils, glass and brushes; provisions and household supplies; forage, flour and seed; photographic supplies and special equipment; engraving, printing and lithographic supplies; fuel and ice; incandescent electric lamps; incandescent gas lamp supplies; motor trucks; typewriting and computing machines; electric service; telephone service.

There are the general classifications under which nearly every conceivable thing on earth is sublimated. One could be born into the world by virtue of the facilities of this general schedule and go out of it by its aid at any old time, and in the course of the life between never know a need that the general schedule could not meet.

Here Are Two Men Who Get Paid for Eating

It sounds like the ideal job when one hears of getting paid for eating, but there are two men in Uncle Sam's employ who draw their salaries mainly because of this, and they will vouch for the fact that such a position is by no means as simple a little thing as a person might suppose. Of course they do more than this. They investigate into foodstuffs, prepare reports and do other things that a layman can hardly explain. But they get paid for eating as well.

The two men are Dr. C. F. Langworthy, chief, and Dr. Robert Milner, assistant, in the bureau of the bureau of food hygiene of the department of agriculture. These two men have a corps of assistants, who, like themselves, are required to do plain and fancy eating. Occasionally a subject is brought in, under the auspices of Uncle Sam, and he is placed in a contrivance which looks like a cell in a police station, and is fed and his temperature is taken. Reports are made as to the effect that the food had on him.

Not long ago a cheese investigation began. Every kind of cheese, rich, juicy cheese, crumbly cheese, cheese that was odorless and cheese that smelled like a Tammany investigation, was brought into the office. Dr. Milner picked out a nice, ripe cheese and cut off a generous slab.

"Everybody try some," he urged, biting into his slice, and everybody did. For a week the office ate cheese omelette, cheese soufflé, cheese pudding, plain cheese, baked cheese, fried cheese and several other kinds of cheese.

The point was to determine whether cheese could be assimilated. The office decided that it could and, inasmuch as some of the hardy workers ate six ounces a day without suffering the slightest ailment, the office seemed to be right.

Pen Picture of Senator LaFollette on Rostrum

DID you ever see Robert M. LaFollette speak? It is more of a sight than a sound. He doubles himself into knots, grinds his teeth and puts on every "prop" of intensity known to the forensic play-actor. He looks as if he means business. One constantly expects to hear him say something that will rip the stars from their appointed places and tumble the indigo ornament upon the frightened world. But he never says it. That's where the joke comes in. And that's what gives point to an observation made recently by W. S. Sinkler Manning. One evening recently Senator LaFollette was making a speech on end, his eyes glittered, his voice sounded like that of the ghost in Hamlet, his snaky fingers wiggled and waved through the air at the terrific "democratic." The blood mantled his face; his teeth ground. At any moment he might say: "Po-to-fo-tum, I smell the blood of a Roosevelt Mun." But he didn't. He said nothing of importance whatsoever, nothing that might not have been uttered in tones as docile as that of a mating dove. Mr. Manning watched him for a while, then, turning in disappointment, he remarked with a sigh:

"I live always in the hope that he will utter some sentence so vital that it will justify the expression on his face."

In His Spare Time.
Two negroes were discussing their young sons, and the first declared he intended to make his hopeful an astronomer. "At a fine job," he concluded. "Yes," drawled the other. "Yeh does twine do do afore, but shuts he gwine to do in day-ast?"

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